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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6254  
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4807  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 7002  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 002624

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: SITREP: TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN RAJASTHAN BATTLE FOR STATUS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 2564

[1](#)B. NEW DELHI 2583

Classified By: PolCouns Ted Osius for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Tensions in Rajasthan between the Gujjar and Meena communities continued unabated on June 2, as Meenas staged counter-demonstrations against Gujjar protests. To maintain pressure on the government, Gujjar leaders brought their protests to the capital, calling a bandh (general strike) in New Delhi on June 4. On the same day, Rajasthan's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Chief Minister (CM) Vasudhara Raje and Gujjar community leader Col Kirori Singh Bhaisala are scheduled to hold talks aimed at breaking the impasse. All previous talks have broken down, as the BJP continues to express support for embattled CM Raje. At COB, media reported that a peace deal was in the offing. Post has updated a warden notice advising American citizens to avoid road and rail transit in Rajasthan which have been disrupted by demonstrators. End Summary.

How to Change Status

[1](#)2. (SBU) Gujjars want the Rajasthan government to recommend to the Center government a change to their status from Other Backward Caste (OBC) to Scheduled Tribe (ST). It is then Parliament's job to consider the request and determine whether to amend the Constitution which defines the status of each community. The status of a community can vary from state to state; for example, Gujjars are STs in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, but not in any other state where they reside.

Meena Community Organizing

[1](#)3. (SBU) On June 2, the Meena community --the only constitutionally recognized ST group in Rajasthan -- took to the streets demanding that the Rajasthan government reject the Gujjar demand. Media reported that 50-60 thousand armed

Meenas tried to enter the town of Daula, which serves as the nerve center for the Gujjar agitation, bent on driving the Gujjars out. Only the presence of large contingents of Army troops and paramilitary forces kept the two groups apart. Five were killed in the resulting Gujjar-Meena clashes, bringing the death toll to 25. Since Meenas outnumber Gujjars by at least two to one, there are growing concerns that Meenas could exact a heavy toll should security break down.

#### Gujjars Respond: Transit Disrupted

14. (SBU) On June 3, Gujjar political leaders, BJP President Rajnath Singh, and the Congress leadership spent a full day on talks in Delhi, which failed to resolve the increasingly tense situation. In another effort to break the impasse, Gujjar community leader Col Kirori Singh Bhaisala traveled to Jaipur on June 4 to meet with Rajasthan CM Vasundhara Raje. Determined to maintain political pressure, the Gujjars called a general stike in Delhi for June 4. RSO reported a massive number of Gujjar demonstrators closed numerous roads leading into the capital and set vehicles on fire.

#### AMCIT Concerns

15. (SBU) Post issued a warden notice on May 30, advising American citizens to avoid traveling by road in Rajasthan. Since numerous highways throughout Rajasthan remain blocked and train transit is now increasingly being affected, Post issued another warden message on June 4 regarding rail transit. Post will continue to closely monitor the

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situation.

#### Political Stalemate

16. (C) Gujjars, traditionally part of the Congress Party vote base, insist that BJP CM Raje made a campaign promise to them to change their status from OBC to ST, and that they switched their loyalties from Congress to BJP on the basis of that promise. While Gujjars are a politically significant community in Rajasthan, the Meenas, traditionally part of the BJP vote base, are a larger community with greater political sway. The BJP is now caught between the diametrically opposed demands from these two communities, both of which are detemined to come out on top. No matter which decisions the BJP government in Rajasthan takes, the aggrieved caste has promised to unleash a caste war against its rival.

17. (c) Incensed by what they view as a broken BJP promise and heavy handed police action, which has so far resulted in 20 Gujjar deaths, caste leaders are demanding CM Raje's resignation. The BJP leadership, fearful that action against Raje would make it look weak, continues to back her, for now.

However, there is a growing consensus that the BJP may be forced to quietly push Raje aside after a decent interval. If a deal can be brokered between the warring castes, however, Raje's tenure could last a bit longer.

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